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Because of the rapid early decline in the rate of development Professor Minot believes that the age of college entrance should be lowered, and that professional studies should be entered upon at a younger age. A final publication of these researches, which have extended through many years, is in preparation.

F. T. L.

The Hypothesis of Mimicry.— Dr. Franz Werner of the University of Vienna is a skeptical critic of the *Mimikrylehre* which he regards as due to a rather crude anthropomorphic point of view (*Biol. Centralbl.*, 27, pp. 174–185). He considers first the non-poisonous snakes which are supposed to have acquired a protective resemblance to the poisonous forms of other genera inhabiting the same locality. Since no snake-eating animal is known which makes a distinction between poisonous and non-poisonous forms, the latter cannot be protected by the similarity of pattern. Moreover in some cases there is reason to believe that the non-poisonous snake is the older type and that the venomous Elaps or Vipera is the “imitator.” The stingless insects which deceptively resemble bees and wasps fare no better than the harmless snakes, for stinging forms are “not in the least protected from their natural enemies; they fall a prey to many birds as well as to lizards, frogs, toads, and spiders.” Finn is cited in evidence that the poisonous Danais is as eagerly devoured in India by lizards of the genus Calotes as are its mimics. Poisonous forms which often exhibit bright warning colors “to signalize their unpalatability to enemies in good season” are not secure.

The similar patterns and colors of various snakes in a given locality may be due to similar climatic conditions and food supply, the pigments involved being physiological by-products. Color photography is invoked to account for the correspondence in color between an animal and its habitat. A physiological rather than a teleological explanation is desired. In other words, it is believed that similar causes produce both the forms which mimic and those which are imitated, and that there is no other relation between the two. From the reports of field observers the number of instances of effective mimicry has been so reduced that “as good as nothing remains.” Dr. Werner believes that man alone has been seriously deceived.

F. T. L.